

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-12 (Cancelled)

13. (New) A method of manufacturing an intermediate bearing comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing a support ring including a bore for receiving a rolling contact bearing;
- (b) disposing a resilient bearing member about the support ring;
- (c) disposing a housing about a portion of said resilient bearing member;
- (d) providing a locking element;
- (e) determining a desired amount of pre-tension for the resilient bearing member; and
- (f) securing the locking element in a position relative to the housing that achieves the desired pre-tension.

14. (New) The method of Claim 13, wherein step (f) further includes positioning a spacer between the locking element and the housing to selectively position the locking element relative to the housing.

15. (New) The method of Claim 13, wherein step (c) further includes disposing three support portions between the support ring and housing.

16. (New) The method of Claim 15, wherein step (c) further includes disposing three buffers between the support ring and housing, such that each of the three buffers is disposed between two of the three support portions, respectively.

17. (New) The method of Claim 13, wherein the housing has a stirrup-shaped cross-section, a pair of flange portions extending outwardly from the resilient bearing member, and a first arched portion connecting each of the pair of flange portions to one another, and further wherein the locking element bridges the space between the pair of flange portions.

18. (New) The method of Claim 17, wherein step (f) further includes positioning a spacer between the locking element and each of the flange portions of the housing to selectively position the locking element relative to the housing.

19. (New) The method of Claim 18, wherein step (f) further includes securing the locking element to the pair of flange portions to achieve the desired pre-tension, such that each spacer is securely disposed between the locking element and the respective flange portion.

20. (New) The method of Claim 17, wherein the locking element includes at least one angled guide portion, and wherein step (f) further includes aligning the at least one angled guide portion of the locking element with one of the pair of flange portions of the housing to position the locking element relative to the housing.

21. (New) The method of Claim 17, wherein step (f) further includes adjusting the distance between the locking element and the pair of flange portions of the housing to position the locking element relative to the housing to achieve the desired pre-tension.

22. (New) The method of Claim 21, wherein step (f) further includes securing the locking element to the pair of flange portions to achieve the desired pre-tension.